



A Qualitative Inquiry of Politeness Approaches through Gender Category: Evidences from University Students in Aceh

Saiful Akmal*

Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry
Banda Aceh, Indonesia
saiful.akmal@ar-raniry.ac.id

Halimatun Husna

Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry
Banda Aceh, Indonesia
halimatun.husna.5.hh@gmail.com

Titin Arifa Maulida

Universitas Syiah Kuala
Banda Aceh, Indonesia
divaanin2107@gmail.com

Muhammad Farkhan

Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah
Jakarta, Indonesia
farkhan@uinjkt.ac.id

Abstract

Purpose

This study examines the politeness strategies employed by male and female students and its differences across genders.

Method

To collect data for this qualitative study, 16 participants (with equally eight male and female students) were purposefully opted from the Department of English Language Education at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh. Eleven situations created to obtain responses from students using a semi-structured interview. The framework of analysis is based on Brown and Levinson's politeness strategy.

Results/Findings

The study found that male and female students use four politeness strategies. They are (a) bald on record; (b) positive politeness; (c) negative politeness; and (d) off-record. The results indicated that positive politeness is the most prevalent strategy, while bald on record is the least utilized strategy. The politeness strategy was utilized when the participants wanted to express their view to classmates or lecturers. The students performed the strategy because they wanted to support their beliefs or statements unswervingly. Male students used more positive politeness and express ideas more directly than female students.

Conclusion

The study concluded that both male and female students at the Department of English Language Education, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh exercised all varieties of politeness strategies. The most applied approaches were positive politeness strategy, followed by the negative politeness strategy, off-record and eventually bald on record as the least frequent politeness strategy.

Keywords

Gender category, politeness strategies, university students

**) Corresponding Author*

Abstrak

Tujuan

Penelitian ini mengkaji perbedaan penggunaan strategi kesantunan berbahasa yang digunakan oleh mahasiswa laki-laki dan perempuan.

Metode

Dalam penelitian kualitatif ini, 16 mahasiswa dan mahasiswi (8 laki-laki dan 8 perempuan) dari Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di UIN Ar-Raniry dipilih dengan menggunakan metode purposive sampling. Sebelas skenario digunakan untuk memperoleh respon dari partisipan studi dengan menggunakan wawancara semi terstruktur yang dilakukan berdasarkan strategi kesantunan Brown dan Levinson.

Hasil/Temuan

Setelah menganalisis data dengan menggunakan 11 skenario situasi, ditemukan bahwa siswa laki-laki dan perempuan menggunakan empat strategi kesantunan: (a) bald on record (tanpa basa-basi); (b) positive politeness (kesopanan positif); (c) negative politeness (kesopanan negatif); dan (d) off-record (menggunakan kalimat tidak langsung). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kesantunan positif adalah strategi yang paling umum digunakan, sedangkan bald on record adalah strategi yang paling sedikit digunakan. Strategi kesantunan digunakan ketika mahasiswa ingin menyampaikan pendapatnya kepada teman atau dosennya.

Kesimpulan

Dapat disimpulkan bahwa baik siswa laki-laki maupun perempuan di Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh menggunakan semua jenis strategi kesantunan. Pendekatan yang paling umum diterapkan adalah strategi kesantunan positif, diikuti oleh strategi kesantunan negatif, off-record dan akhirnya bald on record sebagai strategi kesantunan yang paling jarang digunakan.

Kata Kunci

gender, mahasiswa, strategi kesopanan

المخلص

الهدف

تكشف هذه الدراسة عن استخدام استراتيجيات الأدب اللغوي التي يستخدمها الطلاب والطالبات.

الطريقة

هذا البحث هو بحث نوعي. كان 16 طالبًا (8 ذكور و 8 إناث) من برنامج دراسة تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة الرانيري الإسلامية الحكومية. تم اختيارهم باستخدام طريقة أخذ العينات الهادفة، وتم استخدام أحد عشر سيناريو لاستنباط ردود من المشاركين في الدراسة باستخدام مقابلات شبه منظمة أجريت بناءً على استراتيجيات مهذب براون وليفينسون.

النتائج

باستخدام 11 سيناريو موقف، وجد أن الطلاب والطالبات استخدموا أربع استراتيجيات مهذبة: (أ) أصلع في السجلات (لا معنى له)؛ (ب) الأدب الإيجابي (الأدب الإيجابي)؛ (ج) الأدب السلبي (الأدب السلبي)؛ و (د) غير مسجل (باستخدام جمل غير مباشرة). وظهرت النتائج أن اللباقة الإيجابية كانت الاستراتيجية الأكثر استخدامًا، بينما كان الصلح هو الأقل استخدامًا. ويتم استخدام استراتيجيات التأدب عندما يريد الطلاب نقل آرائهم إلى أصدقائهم أو المحاضرين.

الخلاصة

استراتيجيات التأدب عادةً تستخدم من قبل الطلاب الذين يرغبون في الدفاع عن معتقداتهم أو تصريحاتهم بشكل مباشر. ويظهر الطلاب أدبًا إيجابيًا في كثير من الأحيان أكثر من الطالبات.

الكلمات الرئيسية

الجنس، طالب علم، استراتيجيات الأدب

INTRODUCTION

Everyday, people engage in communication through conversation. People use language to communicate with one another. Language is not only essential for communication but also for establishing and maintaining connections and relations in society. As explained by Akmal (2017), language is a pragmatic aspect of communication that symbolizes an action to determine the actual meaning of speech in real life. Therefore, speakers must have strategies for establishing and maintaining social relationships in the community through the language and action they employ (Puumala & Shindo, 2021). The politeness strategy is one of these strategies. Using politeness strategies, according to Ryabova (2015) is a way to improve communication and generate a more harmonious environment in everyday communication. Politeness has a significant correlation with communication, especially in a way it addresses action in particular contexts (Fetzer & Oishi, 2011). Communication is outlined as the practice by which individuals transmit values to achieve mutual comprehension. Speakers and listeners must conform to general norms or principles and employ specific communication methods. Politeness is a common strategy for accomplishing successful conversation in communication as revealed by Alakrash & Bustan (2020) in their study of request analysis employed by Arabs and Malays students living in Malaysia.

According to Monsefi & Hadidi (2015), politeness means as the use of the word or phrase in the proper circumstances with particular patterns, for instance, in a classroom context gender-based language use can often impact the learning process. Karbelani (2013) further claimed that politeness strategies are used to correct unpleasant remarks, convey the speaker's meaning, and make statements acceptable to the audience member to accompany their speech acts. Politeness strategies enable the public to reduce FTAs (face-threatening acts) in conversation, for example by using negative politeness, especially among Asian students (Salman & Betti, 2020). Conferring to Brown and Levinson (1987), FTA (face-threatening act) is an action that naturally harms the look of the addressee or the speaker by performing against their wishes and needs. In the eye of Brown (2015), face-threatening activities may involve a look, an expression, or other nonverbal communication to threaten the faces of others.

In view of this, Brown and Levinson (1987) categorized politeness strategies into five groupings that speakers employ when conducting face-threatening acts (FTAs): bald-on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness, off-record, and no FTA until the risk of face loss raises further down. According to Yule (1996), the reason people are polite is that they are worried about sustaining two unlike sorts of faces (positive and negative). A positive face is necessary, as it is understood as the desire to be admired, accepted, and appreciated by others (Hastings & Castle Bell, 2018). On the contrary, a negative face is represented in the willingness to be unrestricted and free to act as one pleases (Chen, 2015).

As an essential component of communication, politeness will help people choose the words and express their ideas appropriately. In addition, politeness is the implementation of respectable conducts in reaction to anything and could be different based on social differences, including gender, social status and others. Politeness also relates to the manner in which men and women present an argument or statement. Linguists discovered that women typically employ more politeness than men (Baron, 1986; Fuchs, 2017). Since their speech and behavior establish their social position, males determine their social status based on financial and professional success (Halim et al., 2015; Trudgill, 1997). Goodwin (2014) claims that in directive speech acts, women are more polite than men. This is particularly because women prioritize the directing act by demonstrating group friendliness, whereas men employ the directive act to demonstrate their authority inside the group (Coates, 2016). Men and women have distinct communication strategies and perspectives regarding language use. In addition, the distinct cultures and customs where linguists do their research may profoundly influence these diverse results across linguistic

paradigms (Lakoff, 1975; Goodwin, 2014; Trudgill, 1997).

Studies on gender politeness strategies have also attracted the attention of some scholars. Bavarsad and Simin (2015) investigated the ways male and female Persian learners expressed disagreement through speech acts. Their scholarship concentrated on the role of sexual category and authority in employing tactics of disagreement. They argued females were more cautious and used a diverse approach in voicing their disagreement than their males counterpart. In contrast, females and males were equally alarmed about the power rank of the speaker and tried to put on the suitable tactics while stating their dissimilarity. They similarly discovered four new-fangled forms that Persian students often used while displaying their difference based on culture and power. The four forms are presented: thanking, mitigation of apology, providing a reason, and mitigation of God's will.

Another study referred to was the work of Ramadhani (2014) who examined the politeness strategy across gender in Javanese language indirect speech acts. Her research investigated the politeness techniques of male and female Javanese in a traditional market. The finding from this study disclosed that the most common type of politeness exercised by Javanese men is the bald record strategy, as they are direct in business transactions. Contrariwise, Javanese women use the positive politeness strategy the most, since they demonstrate friendliness to create a friendlier business transaction's atmosphere. Another relevant work from Revita et al. (2017) also examined the Javanese politeness approach by describing the politeness strategies used by criminals to organize women's trafficking in West Java Province in Indonesia. In their business of exploiting women in an illegal workforce, they discovered that the criminals effectively used politeness methods to indulge women joining their illicit business.

To sum up, there are opaque distinctions and similarities between male and female students when delivering a statement or argument. It is clear from the language employed to communicate their beliefs about certain issues. The differences are also clear when they speak and continue to argue. Therefore, although the current studies highlighted above have provided important accounts of the need for further scrutiny of gender differences in language politeness within various settings, many believe those are still insufficient. In fact, there are still gaps as this field of study is naturally central to understand how human continuously adept to changes within the societal interaction and communication. In response to this, the present study will focus on the following two research questions: (1) what types of politeness strategies used by female and male students at the Department of English Language Education, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, and (2) what are the similarities and differences of politeness strategies across gender in the Department of English Language Education, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative research design with a semi-structured interview to collect the data by analyzing the politeness strategies (Adel et al., 2016). This type of interview sanctions more freedom for the participants to reply than for the structured interviews (Nguyen, 2015). A scenario-based question related to the university or campus's contexts of politeness were inquired to the participants (Aliakbari & Moalemi, 2015). The eleven situations provided for interviews are about how the participants provided arguments centered on presumably the usual scenarios in the university's teaching and learning contexts. Furthermore, based on Brown and Levinson's politeness strategy, data differentiation were classified into identical groups or themes (Scharp & Sanders, 2019).

The population of this study was the students of the Department of English Language Education of UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh. The participants were selected purposively by referring to some criteria (Etikan et al., 2016). The sample was chosen from the students at the Department of English Language Education who were advanced-level students. These were considered relevant as Discourse Analysis, Linguistics and Sociolinguistics Courses are available after sixth semester for students at the Department of English Lan-

guage Education, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh.

Thus, the selected sample for this study was 16 students, eight male and eight female. This equal distribution between male and female students is aimed to achieve the representativeness aspect of data. Another reason is because the total number of Discourse Analysis Subject provided on the year the samples were taken is eight (8) classes/units. The participants will be using qualitative coding. Participants 1 to 8 are male students and it will be coded as P1 until P8. In addition, Participants 9 to 16 are female students and it will be coded as P9 until P16.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Eleven scenarios were provided to the interviewees related to their conditions in the campus environment, where probable discussions in the teaching learning process will likely take place as will be explained below.

Situation 1

Your lecturer asks about the novelty of the article for submission. They say, "I am sorry, but I don't think these ideas are yours." But, they are yours and you will reply...

Negative Politeness

Some participants' answers showed a negative politeness strategy in fronting the query above. They utilized multiple negative adjectives or question marks to indicate their views.

"I will say I'm sorry sir for mine. Honestly, that's kind of paper come from my own thinking. I made it by myself, trust me." (P2/ Male Student)

"If my supervisor consider the idea on my paper are not mine. I will ask my supervisor to discuss about that and ask the reason why he or she considers the ideas are not mine, maybe I will say I'm sorry, but the ideas are really mine. If you want to test me, I am ready because I really didn't copy it from any person or source." (P9/ (Female Student)

Based on the responses above, both participants indirectly stated their opinions. They used a negative politeness strategy in communicating. They commenced their speech by expressing regret before.

Positive Politeness

Unlike the prior statement, the next piece illustrates the response that uses positive politeness in dealing with cases. This strategy can be noticed in the manner the participants convey their statements. They immediately said what they wanted. This approach is more direct but less polite.

"Maybe in that condition I will say that if you don't agree, what is your suggestion, sir?" (P10/Female Student)

I will say, No sir, this is my ideas. I paraphrase this idea from the authors. So I write this statement because I found the comparable cases and developed it. So these ideas basically mine." (P4/Male Student)

Based on the responses above, both participants conveyed their opinion in a direct way. They employed a positive politeness tactic in venting their statement. They clearly and directly express what they want to say.

Situation 2

Your colleague vents the subsequent remark on your article: "I think you should supply more data to support your arguments. You know, your conclusion is a little bit weak." Though, you consider there has been ample proof, and the problematic part is how to explain the data well. In reply, you will opine...

Off Record

The succeeding section shows the used of an off-record strategy from participants. This is the utmost polite mode of a declaration, even if it is the least direct. We can comprehend from that the partakers describe their opinion without openly saying what they want.

“Oh, I will say, thank you my friend, maybe I will add some more ideas or some more paragraphs about the topic. You know why I make this paragraph very short? because I’m lazy right now, sorry.” (P5/Male Student)

“I personally happy if my friends or someone give some comments about my thesis because I need their opinion, I need their feedback. That will be good for me.” (P12/Female Student)

Based on the responses above, it appears that both participants used an off-record strategy when responding to the given situation. They do not straightforwardly state what they opinion. Instead, they give details on something that can best exemplify their feelings.

Negative Politeness

A number of partakers’ replies employed a negative politeness approach in dealing with the requests. This can be noticed by the arguments or wordings that they exercised in their assertions. They utilized several negative words to convey their belief.

“I will say: so, what is your idea then? Maybe I can hear your suggestion to make it better.” (P14/Female Student)

“First, I would like to say thanks for your suggestion, I think I don’t know but I just like have provided strong argument or logical reason to support my ideas in this paper. If you say it is a weak argument, can you tell me which part you think so?” (P6/Female Student)

Based on their responses, both participants expressed their ideas indirectly. In delivering their statement, they adopted a negative politeness strategy. They initiated their statement with a question before expressing their opinion.

Positive Politeness

In contrast to the preceding segment, the next section demonstrates the participants’ answers, which exhibited positive politeness strategy in addressing the situation. They directly communicate their desires. This method is recognized for being more straightforward but less polite.

“If one of my friends criticize or say something about my project, that’s okay, I must thank her or him for the comment. If I believe that my project is already good, the evidence is complete, and rechecks all of the stuff, all of the data that the evidence is complete or not. When I check it twice or third the data is complete, so I will never ask someone to check it again. I will never ask my friend. I will go to my supervisor instead.” (P6/Male Student)

“If my friend give me some comments that she think that I should supply more data to support my argument, and I know that the conclusion of my paper is little bit weak, and I agree with her that there’s enough evidence and problem. In response, I’ll say that of course I’ll accept and receive her suggestion for my thesis or my paper because by receiving any suggestions will make me able to easily elaborate the data to support my idea to be better.” (P15/Female Student)

Situation 3

Ladies are not suitable to be a leader. Here, some people cannot tolerate it. In your reaction, you will say...

Off Record

This section demonstrates that the accomplices employed an off-the-record stratagem. This is the utmost polite way to make a declaration, even if it is not directly stated. The excerpt reveals that the participants describe their thoughts without precisely stating what they meant.

“In my opinion, there are many women leaders in governments. As a Muslim, I believe that if there is another man with this responsibility to be leader, it would be better. I accept that woman should not be a leader in some cases. For example, woman for president, I will disagree about this. But, if woman as the member, it is okay. The woman can be a leader if the member also the women.” (P10/Female Student)

“If you say woman is not appropriate to become a leader, I can’t accept it. You need to study first before you become a leader, but, yeah, in contrast that why they don’t give a chance to woman to lead too? In fact that we have a very good minister right now, so we have to give chance to a woman showed up and give her best.” (P12/Female Student)

Based on the responses above, both participants indirectly stated their opinion, and they explained the reason behind the arguments they provided.

Positive Politeness

“All of human in this world are a leader. So, everyone can be a leader. Not just a man. Woman also could be a leader.” (P3)

“Woman to be a leader? why not? That’s human right, isn’t? Woman can also be a leader, president or something else, but just yeah, stay in the rule, just that.” (P11)

Based on their previous comments, both participants now express their opinion. In response to their friends’ assertions, they employed a strategy of positive courtesy. They expressly rejected the notion that women cannot be leaders.

Situation 4

At your acquaintance’s occasion, you say that you are considering of taking some courses for your next semester. Some say, “Ah, I have heard of that course. It’s difficult and boring.” Nevertheless, you have been advised by a colleague that the course is exciting and you have confidence in your colleague. In a retort, you will say...

Negative Politeness

“I’m sorry I think that it depends on personal preference. If you think that is boring just because you don’t like the course or something, that’s just your opinion based on your experience. That’s just another perspective. But, if I think I am happy with my decision to take this course, I’ll take it, no matter what others say. I will say to my friend that it depends on us, our perspectives.” (P14/Female Student)

This participant uses negative politeness strategies in responding to her friend. Here, she expresses regret first before she responds to her colleague’s speech.

Positive Politeness

“I will say, “oh, really? But let me take the course to make sure whether it is interesting or not. Thanks”. (P4/Male Student)

“Oh, seriously? But, I had learned it before and that is really interesting but I thought the course is not that bored, I think the course was not boring, but your lecturer does.”(P9/Female Student)

Situation 5

On one occasion, your colleague failed to recall whether he/she brings a laptop or not, and he or she had to do the seminar. Then, he/she requests to use your laptop, but the laptop is going off, and the battery is simply sufficient for your performance. In reply, you will assert...

Off Record

“This is really complicated situation. I want to help but I also need the laptop. If my friend ask me, maybe I will say actually I really want to help you but my laptop battery is about to die and the battery is only enough for my presentation. How about you borrow the others laptop, I will help to find it.” (P4/Male Student)

She uses an off-record strategy in responding to her friend. Even though she cannot help her colleague, she explains the situation first.

Negative Politeness

“Actually, I want to help, but I’m sorry after your presentation that is my turn and the battery is very low. Perhaps you can ask another one. Sorry.” (P9/Female Student)

“I’m sorry friends; I cannot give my laptop to you because the battery is only enough for my presentation. Moreover, I don’t bring the charger. I want to give it to you if I can, but if I do, I couldn’t use it for my presentation. I’m really sorry.” (P14/Female Student)

Based on the responses above, they used a negative politeness strategy in giving responses. They began their response by expressing regret.

Positive Politeness

“Okay, first, I will tell him what happen to my laptop. And then I will say, if the battery is enough for you, okay take it. If not, I’m sorry.” (P3)

“I will say, my battery is low so if you want to use it you must look for the charger. If you got the charger you may use it. It is her/his fault to not bring the laptop or if the lecturer will let me to do the presentation in the next meeting. I will let my laptop to be borrowed by them.” (P8)

Both participants directly stated that they could not help their friends. They say they do not have adequate battery to offer it to their colleague. Thus, it points to the fact that they utilized a positive politeness strategy in conveying their statement.

Bald on Record

The participants also responded to the case using the bald on record strategy. They express their message directly and appear to command their associates. This strategy is the slightest type of politeness among other strategies.

“Okay, just take it and please charge my laptop. I will see if I have some task to do or not. If not, I will give my laptop to my friend. If I have some work to do, I will not lend my laptop to them.” (P5/Male Student)

“It is so easy I think I will just say; I have no batteries, only enough for my presentation”. Maybe they will say oh, just for a while, for a few minutes. Maybe it will be enough for two of us. No, I prepare my best for my presentation in my laptop and also my best battery for my best presentation.” (P6/Male Student)

Situation 6

You were confined carrying illegal substances, and they aren’t yours. But the lecture claims that things are yours. In reply, you will reiterate...

Negative Politeness

“Oh, I’m so sorry sir. I don’t know about the items. Maybe it is belong to my friend and maybe she or he forget to take the items after putting it to my bag, but it’s really not mine.” (P5/Male Student)

“Sorry sir, that is not mine, how can I prove? I have no idea. I want to tell you that is not mine.” (P9/Female Student)

Positive Politeness

“I will say it’s not mine sir. Simple.” (P2/Male Student)

“If the lecturer insists that the item is mine I will say how can you easily say this is mine? It is really not mine, sir.” (P4/Male Student)

Situation 7

You have promised to see your supervisor on 08:00 am in his office, but you showed up at 08:15. In reply, you will say.

Negative Politeness

“I’m so sorry sir for coming late; I got into a traffic jam. I’m sorry to make you wait.” (P9/Female Student)

“I extremely sorry sir for coming late because I wake up a little bit late today, so forgive me.” (P13/Female Student)

Positive Politeness

“If I’m late to meet my supervisor, I’m going to explain it. Why I’m late. I’m going to explain all of that, because we never know what will happen in our way. So, I’m going to explain the reason to my supervisor in detail. To make them believe me, I’m going to explain honestly, not telling a lie.” (P7/Male Student)

Situation 8

Your lecturer rings you and says that you will receive a “D” if you do not go to their session. Contrariwise, you cannot join their session. In reply, you will say.

Off Record

“I have to take that course but the lecturer say that I get D if I miss the class, then I will say sir actually I don’t want to miss the class, but I have to take a short course for two months, could you give me an approval sir? Or you can give any additional assignment because I can’t join the class. Thank you.” (P4/Male Student)

“Actually I love to coming to your class, but I have a little problem with that. However I try to enter your class.” (P11/Female Student)

Negative Politeness

“I’m going to say I’m so sorry for that, but the lecturer still give the chance to me because she said that you have to go to my class, if you don’t go to my class, you will get D. So that, I’m going to say yes, I’m going to go to your class tomorrow to make your mind that you going to give D for me, in my respond, I’m going to say sorry for the lecturer and i will go to your class next semester.” (P7/Male Student)

“If I were in that situation, I thought it’s better for me to give the decision I will choose I’m not join to that lecturer anymore. So, I will say to the lecturer I’m sorry sir, I have something to do. This is something that important that I can’t manage it. I

thought I will take the course later and so sorry sir.” (P9/Female Student)

Bald on Record

“Okay, if it is happening to anyone, I choose short course and I will get D. But if I do not choose this short course, I will get A. So, it’s up to me.” (P3/Male Student)

Situation 9

In a presentation, you have by now finished the article by yourself, while your colleague who does not support you with the material. In reply, you will reiterate.

Off Record

“I will say that our team is successful because of what? As a team we have to support each other. We have to take our responsibility. I can’t handle the paper by myself, but my friend in team, they can do the presentation, which is teamwork. But let imagine that if the paper is made by myself then my friend do nothing and do not contribute in preparing the paper. It will be bad. But if the lecturer ask me who the person that make the paper, I’m sorry, I will say the truth.” (P15/Female Student)

“I will say maybe we are lacking communication and misunderstanding. I do not know, but i think as a team we should work together. We should collaborate. You have to help me and I help you. The presentation is ours, not mine, not yours.” (P16/Female Student)

Negative Politeness

“I will ask him why he doesn’t want to make this paper together although we are in a group. We have to prepare this paper together; you are not a responsible team member. Then, I will say to him, for the next assignment I will not write his name if he doesn’t want to work together.” (P14/Female Student)

Positive Politeness

“I will say thank you for your help for the presentation, but you have to help me in searching more data about our presentation. You know, it is not only my job, but it’s our job.” (P5/Male Student))

“Maybe I would not say anything. Just look at him or her. From my feeling, maybe I will say where he upset me at that time. I do it by myself, but he doesn’t do anything.” (P10/Female Student)

Bald on Record

“Maybe I don’t say anything because it’s already happened. He or she never help me to prepare the material but presented it, but it is okay I think. I will ask him/her to do something else after the presentation.” (P4/Female Student)

Situation 10

You used your friend’s book. You damaged the book unintentionally. In reply, you will say.

Negative Politeness

“I will say I’m so sorry, this is my fault. If I see from his face that she/he was disappointed to me, I will buy another book or pay it.” (P2/Male Student))

“I will say sorry for sure, and I will ask her/him should I give her compensation for it

or ask where did you buy it? So I can replace it with another thing or I may just give him/her the money, or something based on the deal.” (P8/Male Student)

Situation 11

At some point, your mother requested you to go together with your granny to the clinic, but at that point, you have a meeting and were also assigned as the event’s project manager. In reply, you will say.

Off Record

“Actually this is never happening for me, but if once my mother asked me to accompany my grandma and sometimes I have another schedule, I will tell my mom what I’m doing, what is the consequence if I leave the project. I will suggest another person or if I have a brother or I have another sister, just go with them not me.” (P6/Male Student)

Negative Politeness

“I will tell my mother, Mom, is it only me to accompany the grandmother? Why not my sister? And if my mom said my sister was also busy. Maybe I will cancel my work because family is number one for me.” (P5/Male Student)

“I’m really sorry mom. But it doesn’t mean I don’t want to do this but I just have to finish another activity first because I’m project manager this time that we handle now with my friend. So, we are having a meeting right now and I’m begging on you to give me a permission to go to that meeting. I’m so sorry mom.” (P13/Female Student).

Positive Politeness

“Mom, I have something that is very urgent. Maybe you can ask the sister and maybe after I do my project, I will come there.” (P10/Female Student)

“If my mom asks me to accompany my grandmother to the hospital and in the same time I have a meeting or whatever, I will say yes, I will accompany my grandmother to the hospital, because family is more than anything. Family is everything.” (P15/Female Student)

Bald on Record

“I will cancel the meeting and will accompany my grandma to the hospital.” (P2/Male Student)

“I have to accompany my grandma to the hospital, so I cancel the meeting.” (P11/Female Student))

Types of Politeness Strategies

This study highlighted students’ politeness strategies when reacting to the given scenarios or situations. We came up with two research questions. (1) What types of politeness strategies used by female and male students at the Department of English Language Education, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, and (2) what are the similarities and differences of politeness strategies across gender in the Department of English Language Education, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh. The discussion on the findings will be elaborated below

Regarding the types of politeness strategies used by male and female students, our findings showed that at least there were four often used strategies: positive politeness, negative politeness, off-record, and bald on record. In terms of positive politeness, male students used this strategy slightly more often than their female counterparts. For instance, conferring to P13, in the first situation, he replied, “This paper is mine.” I can prove it. You can ask me everything about the paper, and I can explain it in detail”. The

sentence "This paper is mine..." demonstrates that he openly expressed his views. Conversely, P6 replies to the same situation by "... that ideas are mine..." as we can also see that he exercises a positive politeness. Also, the result shows that this strategy is typically triggered when people shield their aspiration, something that was also noticed in the study conducted by Fernández-Amaya (2019). Alternatively, this strategy is also used when they want to give a remark or idea and voicing self-identification of power (Prayitno et al., 2018).

The second most frequent use of politeness strategy found in this present study is negative politeness. It also shows that the female participants usually use a negative politeness strategy when giving their comments or statements. According to P4, in the tenth situation, when she damages her friend's book, she responds, "I'm so sorry." I didn't mean to hurt you. "I will buy you another book." Here, she responds to the case with the negative sentence, "I'm so sorry..." from the statement, she does not directly refer to the damage she has done. Instead, she begins with regret. In another situation, P11, when she comes late to meet his supervisor, she says to the lecturer, "I am sorry, it is my mistake." I am late, but I promise you next time I'll not come late". She also uses regret before stating what she has done. It is apparent that this strategy is dominant for social conflict avoidance, something very similar to the research conducted by Seli and Syafitri (2018). This strategy is also frequently exercised by those who wronged their colleagues, which is similar to the one found by Wardoyo (2017), in which he also found that when apologizing to the lecturer for coming late, students tend to use a direct apology followed by an explanation and request. But when apologizing to their friends, they use a direct apology followed by a promising, explanation, and offering repair (Abbas et al., 2019).

The off-record politeness strategy is an approach usually employed when facing some situations in conversation. It is found from our findings that males are more dominant in using this off-record strategy than their females' colleagues. Rendering to P5, in the second situation, he states, "Thank you, my friend." Maybe I will add some more ideas or paragraphs about the topic. Perhaps that is why I put in such a short paragraph, because I'm having a lazy time right now. From the sentences, it is clear that he does not straightforwardly reveal what he wanted to express. He also specified his reply in a polite way. While oppositely, in the same situation, P12 distinguished response is recorded, "I am personally happy if there is my friend or someone that comments about my thesis or my proposal because I need their opinion. I need their argument. If that's good for my thesis or my paper, I can take it for reference." At this point, she too clarifies why she is acting that way, deprived of saying that she is very pleased. Consequently, people regularly employ this approach when expressing delight as mention by Culpeper and Terkourafi (2017).

The least politeness strategy is bald on record which was sparingly used by female students. For example, based on P11's response to the ninth situation, she said that "Of course, you can use my laptop in your presentation even if the battery is low." I can borrow it from another friend; no problem, you can use that." This assertion showcases P 11 in placing his reply without any explanation. He unswervingly suggests his colleague to use his notebook, even if it looks impolite to some extent. Furthermore, a different student also practices this approach (P 4). For example, when his friend does not support her preparing the paper, a female student replies, "Maybe I want to say anything because it's already happened." They never help me to prepare the material, but he has presented it, but it's okay, I think. Still, I will ask them to do something else after the presentation". The final statement reads, "I will ask him/her to do something else after the presentation," This demonstrates that she orders his colleague to do it straight. The section illustrated that the students rarely uses this tactic. The result also disclosed that this tactic is generally exercised in a moment when somebody is dissatisfied with their colleagues (Khammari, 2021).

The Comparisons and Dissimilarities of Politeness Strategies Across Genders

In the context the teaching-learning process situations of utterances at university, our findings have shown that male and female students employed four politeness strategies in conveying their thoughts or feelings. In certain situations, both of them have something in common. Yet, they similarly have some dissimilarity when voicing their thinking. The first resemblance is that both males and females use the same politeness strategy when they make some mistakes. For example, in the seventh situation, when they produce an assurance to their supervisor for being late, both males and females use negative politeness in conveying their statements. Both said, "I'm sorry ..." before elucidating what they had prepared to explain to their supervisor. Another comparison is that both male and female students exercised positive politeness tactic to shield their causes (Arif et al., 2018). For instance, as in the fourth situation, they will register for an exciting course next semester despite suggestion from their friends that the course is unexciting.

Nevertheless, there are also some general portraits of differences between male and female students on the use of politeness strategies. The first difference is that males dominantly use positive politeness more than females and the female counterpart used negative politeness slightly more often than male students. It is partly owing to the fact that male students confidently able to express their voices straightforwardly, whereas female students are not, something resemblance to the findings discovered by Eshghinejad and Moini (2016). Males commonly exercise positive politeness in conveying their opinions. They are more outspoken in voicing their aspirations than their female counterparts. Contrary to male students, female students relatively reluctant to express their ideas and tend to first apologize before stating their views. They use more negative politeness and start their statements by expressing regret. Hence, it is safe to say that female students, according to the findings, are more polite than male students. This is a confirmation of previous study conducted by Park et al. (2016) and Wahyuningsih (2018) in her study whereby women's languages are warmer, and more polite in using language as argued by

CONCLUSION

The present study have tried to answer two research questions: (1) What types of politeness strategies used by female and male students at the Department of English Language Education, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, and (2) what are the similarities and differences of politeness strategies across gender in the Department of English Language Education, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh. It can be concluded that both male and female students at the Department of English Language Education, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh exercised all varieties of politeness strategies. The most commonly applied approaches were positive politeness strategy, followed by the negative politeness strategy, off-record and eventually bald on record as the least frequent politeness strategy. Likewise, the politeness strategy was employed when the students sought to express their view to their classmates or lecturers or to support their opinions or straightforwardly. The next commonly implemented tactic is the negative politeness strategy. This can be observed when the students needed to convey their belief by exercising regret. At this point, they express the opinions meanderingly to preserve the sense of politeness. Therefore, this tactic was often employed when the students did something incorrect.

In addition, off-the-record and bald-on-record approaches were applied in some situations too. The off-record strategy was exercised when the students sought to express thanks and show gratitude tortuously. Then again, the bald strategy was applied when the students sent their declarations in direct but least polite. In addition, there are some resemblances and dissimilarities between female and male students when applying the politeness approach. Both male and female students used more positive politeness in their remarks. They adopted positive politeness strategy to maintain their view and implemented negative politeness to express guilt. Above and beyond, male students exercised more positive politeness reasonably than their female colleagues who tend to exercise more

negative politeness strategy.

Accordingly, this study certainly has its limitation as it did not provide a thorough analysis of a detailed reasoning why certain male or female students used particular politeness strategies in their answers. Hence, this study is far from portraying the entire reality or the exact account of language politeness strategy rationales by taking 16 male and female students with a limited 11 prearranged situations to be answered. Still, many unresolved issues remain in this petite contribution, for example a close analysis on politeness analysis of senior students' conversation with junior or new students coming in to the university would be something interesting to be examined for future researchers in the field.

REFERENCES

- Abbas, F., Anjum, K., & Pasha, S. B. (2019). Speech act of apology by Pakistani English speakers through the theory of politeness. *The Dialogue*, 14(2), 196–213.
- Adel, S. M. R., Davoudi, M., & Ramezanzadeh, A. (2016). A qualitative study of politeness strategies used by Iranian EFL learners in a class blog. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*, 4(1), 47–62.
- Akmal, S. (2017). The language of political campaign in post-civil war muslim society. *Aricis Proceedings*, 1(8), 683–690.
- Alakrash, H. M., & Bustan, E. S. (2020). Politeness strategies employed by Arab EFL and Malaysian ESL students in making request. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 10(6), 10–20. <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v10-i6/7257>
- Aliakbari, M., & Moalemi, R. (2015). Variation of ooliteness strategies among the Iranian students. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 5(5), 981–988. <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0505.13>
- Arif, N., Iskandar, I., Muliati, A., & Patak, A. A. (2018). Male and female lecturers' politeness strategies in EFL classroom. *International Journal of Humanities and Innovation (IJHI)*, 1(2), 88–98.
- Baron, D. (1986). *Grammar and gender*. Yale University Press.
- Brown, P. (2015). Politeness and Language. In N. J. Smelser & P. B. Baltes (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (pp. 326–330). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.53072-4>
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge University Press.
- Chen, G. M. (2015). Losing face on social media. *Communication Research*, 42(6), 819–838. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650213510937>
- Coates, J. (2016). *Women, men and language: A sociolinguistic account of gender differences in language* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Culpeper, J., & Terkourafi, M. (2017). Pragmatics and (im)politeness. In J. Culpeper, M. Haugh, & D. Kadar (Eds.), *Palgrave Handbook of (Im)politeness* (pp. 11–39). Palgrave.
- Eshghinejad, S., & Moini, M. R. (2016). Politeness strategies used in text messaging. *SAGE Open*, 6(1), 215824401663228. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244016632288>
- Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.11648/J.AJTAS.20160501.11>
- Fernández-Amaya, L. (2019). Disagreement and (im)politeness in a Spanish family mem-

- bers' WhatsApp group. *Russian Journal of Linguistics*, 23(4), 1065–1087. <https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-2019-23-4-1065-1087>
- Fetzer, A., & Oishi, A. (2011). Introduction. In A. Fetzer & E. Oishi (Eds.), *Context and contexts*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Fuchs, R. (2017). Do women (still) use more intensifiers than men? *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 22(3), 345–374. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ijcl.22.3.03fuc>
- Goodwin, J. (2014). Conceptions of speech acts in the theory and practice of argumentation: A case study of a debate about advocating. *Studies in Logic, Grammar and Rhetoric*, 36(1), 79–98. <https://doi.org/10.2478/slgr-2014-0003>
- Halim, H., Kaseng, S., Taha, Z., & Hamsa, A. (2015). Politeness in Buginese language as a social status symbol in Wajo regency. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 6(1), 230–239. <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.0601.29>
- Hastings, S. O., & Castle Bell, G. (2018). Facing our heuristic limits: Expanding the terminology for types of positive face. *Communication Quarterly*, 66(1), 96–110. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01463373.2017.1340317>
- Karbelani, A. (2013). Politeness strategies usage in accompanying assertive illocutionary acts on Barack Obama's speech and interview toward the development of Islamic center near ground zero. *The International Journal of Social Sciences*, 16(1), 50–56.
- Khammari, H. (2021). Strategies and mitigation devices in the speech act of disagreement in American English. *Studies in Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis*, 2(1), 26–39. <https://doi.org/10.48185/spda.v2i1.243>
- Lakoff, R. T. (1975). *Language at woman's place*. Cambridge University Press.
- Monsefi, M., & Hadidi, Y. (2015). Male and female EFL teachers' politeness strategies in oral discourse and their effect on the learning process and teacher-student interaction. *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature (IJSELL)*, 3(1), 1–13.
- Nguyen, T. Q. T. (2015). Conducting semi-structured interviews with the Vietnamese. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 15(1), 35–46. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-04-2014-0012>
- Park, G., Yaden, D. B., Schwartz, H. A., Kern, M. L., Eichstaedt, J. C., Kosinski, M., Stillwell, D., Ungar, L. H., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2016). Women are Warmer But No Less Assertive Than Men: Gender and Language on Facebook. *PLOS ONE*, 11(5), e0155885. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0155885>
- Prayitno, H. J., Ngalim, A., Sutopo, A., Rohmadi, M., & Yuniawan, T. (2018). Power, orientation, and strategy of positive politeness used by children at the age of elementary school with Javanese cultural background. *Humanus*, 17(2), 164–173. <https://doi.org/10.24036/humanus.v17i2.101371>
- Puumala, E., & Shindo, R. (2021). Exploring the links between language, everyday citizenship, and community. *Citizenship Studies*, 25(6), 739–755. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13621025.2021.1968696>
- Ramadhani, P. (2014). Politeness strategies and gender differences in Javanese indirect speech acts. *Jurnal Linguistik Terapan Pascasarjana Unimed*, 15(1), 24–33.
- Revita, I., Trioclarise, R., & Anggreiny, N. (2017). Politeness strategies of the panders in womentrafficking. *Buletin Al-Turas*, 23(1), 191–210.
- Ryabova, M. (2015). Politeness strategy in everyday communication. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 206, 90–95. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.10.033>

- Bavarsad, S.S., & Simin, S. (2015). A cultural study of social disagreement strategies by Iranian EFL male and female learners. *International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences*, 48, 78–90. <https://doi.org/10.18052/www.scipress.com/ILSHS.48.78>
- Salman, H. S., & Betti, M. J. (2020). Politeness and face threatening acts in Iraqi EFL learners' conversations. *GLOSSA*, 3(8), 221–233.
- Scharp, K. M., & Sanders, M. L. (2019). What is a theme? Teaching thematic analysis in qualitative communication research methods. *Communication Teacher*, 33(2), 117–121. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17404622.2018.1536794>
- Seli, S., & Syafitri, D. (2018). Politeness in bad neighbors movie. *Linguistic, English Education and Art (LEEA) Journal*, 1(2), 129–142. <https://doi.org/10.31539/leea.v1i2.187>
- Trudgill, P. (1997). The social differentiation of English in Norwich. In *Sociolinguistics* (pp. 179–184). Macmillan Education UK. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-25582-5_15
- Wahyuningsih, S. (2018). Men and women differences in using language: A case study of students at STAIN Kudus. *Edulite Journal of English Education, Literature, and Culture*, 3(1), 79–90. <https://doi.org/10.30659/e.3.1.79-90>
- Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.

